

to continue to emit more mercury into the atmosphere. I cannot believe anyone would take that as a fair exchange. Would you rather make sure our coal-fired powerplants have the right to increase the emissions of mercury or would you rather know that this child who may be in utero has a lesser chance of being affected by the scourge of mercury?

Stated in a publication put out by the National Education Association, small doses of mercury can impair the brain and the developing nervous system. Infants who appear normal during the first few months of life may later display subtle effects, shorter attention span, poorer motor skills, slow language development, problems with visual-spatial ability such as drawing and memory. These children will likely need extra help to keep up in school, possibly remedial classes or special education.

I hope all of our colleagues, who I know feel as strongly about the protection of our people as I do, but for goodness sake, do not ignore those protections by saying we have to make sure that the powerplants do not have to do their part and reduce the emission of more mercury.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I yield 5 minutes to the Senator from Missouri, Senator BOND.

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I thank the chairman of our committee.

I rise to ask my colleagues in the Senate to think about raising energy costs on American families and workers when we are suffering a significant energy problem. The American people already are struggling with high gasoline prices. The natural gas prices are going to go even higher. Winter is approaching, with heating bills regrettably expected to go through the roof.

This, in my view, is no time to hit our families with even more energy price hikes. To borrow a slogan from the other side, those are not family friendly.

Supporters of using the Congressional Review Act to overturn EPA's new mercury regulation will not mention the higher energy costs they will bring. The problem is, voting for this motion requires an impossible solution. The technology does not exist to accomplish what proponents want. They want to reduce mercury from coal emissions by 90 percent. The administration wants to reduce it by 70 percent. If I had a magic wand, I would be happy to wave it and support a 90-percent reduction. But I don't. And the hard-working workers and vulnerable families in Missouri and all the other States represented here would not be able to take the higher costs that would come with this.

Sponsors claim the technology exists and is used in Europe. But they might not mention the technology is used on municipal waste. The last time I

checked, orange peels and coffee grinds were a little different from coal. Sponsors may say the technology is starting to be pilot tested in the United States. What they are testing it on is Eastern coal, Appalachian coal, not Western coal, which is a different chemical makeup. It may still seem like coal to you and me, but it makes extracting tiny amounts of mercury very difficult. Western coal is used overwhelmingly in Missouri, and many of our Western States do not respond to the same technologies pursued by the motion's sponsors.

Therefore, generators serving my State of Missouri and many other Western coal States would be forced to shut down their coal plants and switch to natural gas to make electricity.

Natural gas prices are three times what they were just a few years ago. Using it to make electricity, one Nobel laureate scientist said, is like burning your antique furniture in your fireplace to heat your home.

Manufacturers and employers who depend upon natural gas for a raw material are outsourcing their operations to China and other low-cost natural gas areas. That means Missouri workers and workers in States of my colleagues who make plastics, automobiles, chemicals, and metals will be losing jobs. Do we want to see even more workers hurt?

Farmers everywhere are already facing high prices for natural-gas-dependent fertilizer. Terrible drought has struck the Midwest's corn and soybean crops. On top of this, the Midwestern barge traffic is crippled by Hurricane Katrina. Do we want to put more burden on the agricultural sector?

Fixed-income seniors have little room in their monthly expenses for higher air-conditioning, power, and heating bills. Do we want to hurt these seniors even more?

Our low-income breadwinners must drive long distances from rural or urban low-cost housing to get to their good-paying jobs. Their gasoline bills have imposed a heavy tax. Do we want to hurt these vulnerable families more?

We all deserve clean air. We need waters free from contamination. We must have food safety. That is why this President imposed the first mercury emissions cuts in our Nation's history. The last administration had to be sued to take action on mercury. Now President Bush is requiring mercury cuts—70 percent cuts for acid-rain-causing sulfur dioxide, 70 percent for smog-causing nitrogen oxides, and 70 percent for mercury.

Under the President's Clear Skies plan imposed by regulation, nearly every American city will return to clean and healthy air. They will achieve Federal air quality standards without having to impose their own State or local regulations, killing jobs and hassling citizens.

We all care about the environment. Together, by defeating this motion, we can protect the environment, protect

family budgets, and protect workers' jobs.

I urge my colleagues to vote no on the underlying resolution. We do not need to disapprove this regulation that would move our environmental cause significantly forward.

I yield the floor.

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, mercury contamination is a critical environmental health issue. This is why I could not be more disappointed about the Environmental Protection Agency's so-called "Utility Mercury Reductions Rule" which was finalized in March of this year. The rule jeopardizes the health of our citizens, which is why I have cosponsored Senate Joint Resolution 20, a resolution that disapproves of the Administration's fatally flawed mercury rule. I will include for the RECORD a letter signed by 15 States, including Wisconsin, which urges passage of S.J. Res. 20.

The need for stringent mercury controls has never been more urgent. We know that mercury is a neurotoxin and that mercury exposure can cause a wide range of neurological problems and developmental delays. EPA's own scientists have discovered that twice as many American children are born at risk from mercury exposure than previously thought and the EPA has reported that 1 out of every 6 women of child-bearing age has so much mercury in her blood that it poses a risk to a developing fetus. These risks should not be overlooked. We are talking about the increased potential for developmental delays, lowered IQ, and attention and memory problems, as well as learning disabilities. In addition to the obvious and enormous emotional and psychological toll of such problems, a recently released peer-reviewed Mount Sinai School of Medicine study found that mercury-related brain development problems in children cost the United States more than \$2 billion annually. Despite the well-documented health risks posed by mercury emissions, especially to women and children, the administration has moved forward with this flawed rule.

Thirteen million acres of lakes and 760,000 miles of rivers across the country have been contaminated by mercury emissions. In fact, in an attempt to protect their citizens, 45 States across the country have issued fish consumption advisories related to mercury. Anglers are warned against eating the very fish they catch because of widespread mercury contamination. Sadly, every one of the 15,057 lakes in my home State of Wisconsin is under a mercury-related warning, so I understand this problem all too well. And even if Wisconsinites didn't eat the fish they caught inside our State, many of them would still be at risk, according to EPA and Food and Drug Administration warnings, if they decided to consume saltwater species like tuna, shellfish, or swordfish. Given the situation in Wisconsin, I was not surprised when the State joined nine other States earlier this year in a lawsuit to force the